

Epicureanism as the spiritual essence or 'religion' of an entire community

Post by “Cassius” of February 10, 2024 at 7:12 AM

Here is something that I think is closely related to this topic:

Nothing irritates me more than reading academics accuse Epicurus of hypocrisy in writing a last will and testament when supposedly death should have been "nothing" to him.

No community which does not provide for continuity, reproduction, rearing, and education of children and the institutions that support that (such as marriage and families and similar long-term extension of 'friendship') can possibly be self-sustaining over any length of time. It is simply not true that "everyone" does or can ever love everyone indiscriminately such as the monotheistic religions preach everyone as children of the same god. People naturally associate with people of similar disposition to themselves, and there are many different types of dispositions, and those of similar disposition can sustain themselves only by working together to do so.

It seems to me that Epicurus' will clearly establishes that he was well aware of these issues, and those who respect his example ought to be doing similar things.

As I see it there is far too much "consumerism" in Epicurean philosophy as well, which results in treating it as a sort of happiness pill that can be taken once or periodically and then go about your normal modern-world business as if what you have learned has no practical applications.

Ideas go hand in hand with action and one is useless without the other. Most of what would come under an "Epicurean religion" in my mind is just the practical application of Epicurean viewpoints to real life. Not smoke and mirrors and incantations and white gowns and untranslated words and incense and bowing and asceticism and minimization and zeroed-out minds and transcendental meditation, but clear-sighted active use of the time one has to make one's life the most emotionally satisfying (which means *pleasing*) it can be.

Such people are strong and independent and self-sufficient, but still recognize that there are things that bind them together with their friends that they cannot live happily without cultivating and working to ensure their continuity. If "res-ligio" is taken as a reference to things that bind, then our lives and societies require habits and practices and institutions to bind them together just like our bodies require ligaments to bind our bones and muscles and keep the body functioning. "Ideas" can't do that without action.